

**REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday May 19, 2022 6:30 P.M.**

An on-line meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was held on this date.

**ROLL CALL:**

Eva Kyriakides, Association for Bright Children (ABC) (SEAC Chair)  
sensaRAneb Burrell, Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter  
Carissa Lewis, Black Parents Support Group  
Tara Culley, Durham Down Syndrome Association  
Christina Salisbury, Easter Seals Ontario  
Rowin Jarvis, Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region  
Carolyn McLennon, Member At Large  
Donna Edge-Bean, Member At Large  
Elizabeth Daniel, Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders  
Kathy Kedey, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children  
Vera Mercier, Early Years Consortium – Non-voting member

Trustees: Donna Edwards Darlene Forbes

Staff: Superintendent, Andrea McAuley  
Senior Manager & Clinical Lead-Speech Language and Hearing Services, Lisa Drake

Recording Secretary: Lisa Wry

1. **Call to Order:**  
SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.
2. **Land Acknowledgement:**  
SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides advised that the Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, learn and live.
3. **DDSB Human Rights & Equity Statement**  
The Durham District School Board is committed to learning environments that are safe, welcoming, respectful, equitable, accessible, inclusive and free from discrimination while placing Human Rights and Equity at the center.
4. **Welcome Guests:** Dawn White - Principal G.L. Roberts, Dave Robson - Principal Dr. S. J. Phillips. Lisa Virtue – Speech Language Pathologist, Rema Saati - Vice Principal, Carruthers Creek P.S., Lyanne Hussey - Literacy/Numeracy coach.

**Regrets:** Donna Edge-Bean, Trustee Darlene Forbes.

**Absent:** Christina Salisbury,

5. **Approval of Agenda:**

That the agenda for May 19, 2022 be approved:

MOTION BY: Donna Edwards

SECONDED BY: Tara Culley

CARRIED

6. **Approval of the Minutes from April 21, 2022:**

That the minutes from April 21, 2022 be approved:

MOVED BY: Tara Culley

SECONDED BY: Donna Edwards

CARRIED

7. **Staff Reports:**

**SEAC: May 2022 Administration Report**

May and June bring celebrations of student achievement. Tonight, as we meet, the Durham Black Educators Network, DBEN, hosts the DBEN Cultivating Possibilities Awards. The awards highlight the engagement, leadership, and achievements of youth in Grades 7 to 12 attending Durham District School Board (DDSB) schools. This year, DBEN is proud to offer 12 awards to students, including two new awards that have been added in 2022. Please note the link in our meeting chat box that takes you to information about tonight's honourees. Next Thursday, we will honour three Student Recognition Award Recipients from each secondary school. These outstanding students, not yet announced publicly, will be honoured for their exceptional contributions to the school and community or for overcoming obstacles to achieve personal success. Our students inspire us, challenge us to be better for them, and teach us.

Well-being, mental health and learning are intertwined. Our teams feel privileged to be able to support students in all of these areas. Our students continue to amaze us and challenge us to our most creative thinking in individualizing their school experiences. The changes we are making to grow in professional learning and better serve our students are evidenced in the Special Education Plan for 2022-2023. A reminder to SEAC members that feedback is always welcome and is important to the writing of the annual plan and in programming considerations in service of students and families. Following SEAC, the draft plan for 2022-2023 will be finalized in preparation for publishing publicly and sharing with Trustees at the June Standing Committee prior to submission to the Ministry of Education.

We draw attention to a few key sections of the Special Education Plan where updates have been made:

- Professional Learning
- Referral Process
- Staffing

Over the past two years, staffing has been augmented above base district FTE, through funds such as Supports for Student Funding, COVID response dollars and other project-based opportunities.

Within the proposed budget, we have moved to make permanent, mental health positions, specifically Social Work and Psychological Services positions, previously additional to model

through temp funding, through the new Mental Health and Well-Being bundle now embedded in the GSN. This year, we implemented a pilot program of Well-Being Youth Workers, and formalize this role within the proposed draft budget for 2022-2023 adding this key role of direct support in schools – for educator learning and direct student Tier 2 supports.

May, each school year, brings a focus on transitions. That remains true this year with the added shifts of students from remote or virtual to in-person. We thank families/caregivers, staff across all roles and most importantly students for the privilege of being part of their supports.

This is our Administrator report for May 2022.

**Board:** Trustee Donna Edwards informed SEAC members that the Board of Trustees received information and presentations on: retirement notice of our Director, Norah Marsh, resignation of a Trustee; presentation from Ignite Durham Learning Foundation, passed human rights and anti discrimination, anti racism policy. As well as the workplace harassment policy. Will be looking at the emergency school closure policy revisions in the coming months. Some properties have been re-circulated for sale, Cartwright H.S. and former H. W Knight P.S. Annual report from the Integrity Commissioner. Ontario Public School Board Association will be having its annual general meeting in November. Capital project approval for a new North Oshawa High School

#### **8. Inclusive Student Service Department Report- May 19, 2022**

Updates this month include:

- Speech Language & Hearing Month
- Children's Mental Health Week
- Transitions Supports for Students 18+
- Partnership Highlight: Lakeridge Health – Pinewood Centre
- Invitation: Abilities Track & Field Meet

#### **May is Speech Language & Hearing Month**

- Teams are promoting awareness of speech-language and hearing through social media
- Posts focus on understanding and supporting communication in the classroom
- Great Beginnings Series: DDSB and Grandview SLPs partnered to present information about speech-language services, milestones and ideas for parents to help children get ready to communicate at school on May 5th
- Speech-language pathologists are connecting with families who have children entering JK at Great Beginnings individual school events

#### **Partnership to Support Reading Tutoring: K-2 Literacy Project**

The K-2 Literacy Project is a collaboration between a speech-language pathologist and literacy coach to guide how educators teach children to read and write based on the science of reading. This unique team approach brings together knowledge and experience from two professional fields in order to have the greatest impact on student learning. As a result of this partnership, educators are implementing the teaching strategies they have learned, and students are having fun and experiencing success as they learn to read and write.

Training for the tutors is being facilitated in partnership between  
Curriculum Literacy & Numeracy Coach: Lyanne Hussey and Inclusive Student Services  
Speech Language Pathologist: Lisa Virtue

### **Mental Health & Well-Being: Children's Mental Health Week**

Each Year, schools across Ontario mark the first full week of May as Children's Mental Health Week. We all have mental health just like we all have physical health. There are many ways we can enhance and promote mental health.

This important week is about:

- Increasing awareness of child and youth mental health,
- Decreasing stigma, and
- Understanding that help and supports are available.

Activities were organized by Student Senate, our Mental Health support teams, the Parent Involvement Committee, and at a school level as educators access resources through an online toolkit created to support classroom level conversations & learning.

Mental health advocates and guests during Children's Mental Health Week included spoken word artist Asante Haughton, Shaun Boothe, and mental health professional Charmaine Lane. The Parent Involvement Committee hosted Dr. John Duffy as he spoke to over 500 families gathered virtually on parenting teens as they deal with the emotions social media and information overwhelm can create.

### **Special Education Plan**

Updates to the DDSB Special Education Plan for 2022-2023 include:

- Revision to DDSB Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Education IPRC including shift in language from 'case conference' to 'care conference and amplified emphasis on the importance of ongoing parent/guardian voice in program and pathway planning.
- Revision to the DDSB Transition Guide including addition of new transition pathway partnership such as students moving to school from the newly introduced Ontario Autism Program – Entry to School Program.
- Removal of documents specifically focused on remote learning and intersect with special education processes and tools (IEPs and IPRCs).

### **Special Education Programs – Planning for 2022-2023**

#### **Special Education Program Changes for Next Year**

##### **Elementary**

- Open (2): 1 School Support Program Class, 1 Developmental Program Class
- Closures(2): Self Regulation Class, Virtual Developmental Class
- Relocation of 1 Developmental Program

##### **Secondary:**

- Open (7): 1 School Support Program Class, 4 Practical Learning Program Classes, 2 Developmental Program Classes
- Closures (3): 2 School Support Program Classes, 1 Transition to Work Program Class
- Program changes have been embedded in school staffing for the 2022-2023 school year.
- School and Inclusive Student Services teams are engaged in program offers for students, IPRCs and transition planning.
- Schools are currently working through teacher staffing and district teams are working through staffing processes for classroom support staff roles (e.g., Educational Assistants, Interpreters and Intervenors).

### **Transition Supports: Students 18+**

Intentional and comprehensive transition planning for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities is essential in preparing for the transition from schooling to adult pathway (direct entry to workforce, post-secondary education, adult programming). Our **Transition and Work Education Coordinators** support students, families and school teams in this planning.

Highlights of student supports through **Transition and Work Education Coordinators**:

#### **Direct Student Support**

- 181 Students
- Highlights of student supports through **Transition and Work Education Coordinators**:

#### **Program Supports**

- The Transition to Work Program has been accessing Work Education Placement opportunities since October of this school year. This spring a couple of PLP classes have chosen to begin accessing community-based Work Education opportunities.

#### **Community Connections** (Final Life Beyond High School Webinar of series)

- Throughout the school year, we have collaborated with several community partners to organize information nights/engagement events to prepare for the various pathways after high school, learning more about their community services, making connections asking questions, and building networks.

#### **Consultation**

Through Integrated Transition planning and direct support, the Transition coordinators:

- Provide ample time Grades 8-9+ and easily accessible forums for families to get information, ask questions, and discuss their concerns about the transition to adulthood.
- Emphasize employment, work experiences, and post-secondary readiness, Life skills, and community participation, that align with IEP goals.
- Foster self-efficacy and goal-setting. Observe, identify and focus student's interests, model the goal-setting process and develop an action plan.

#### **Partnership Highlight: Lakeridge Health-Pinewood Centre**

Pinewood, through Lakeridge Health, provides screening, assessment, referral, and evidence-based treatment to individuals (adults, youth and their family members) with substance use, problem gambling, and concurrent disorders concerns within the Central East Local Health Integration Network.

Through partnership, secondary students in the DDSB are able to access addiction counsellors through care which has focus including:

- Client-focused, strengths-based care
- Support focused on own substance use, problem gambling/gaming/and technology use or concurrent needs appropriate for Pinewood Centre services
- Assisting youth in defining own treatment goals and support towards these goals
- Range of supports including options of group therapy, individual therapy; evidence-based and recovery-focused models
- As part of the partnership agreement, Pinewood Centre provides an addiction counsellor to provide on-site services during school hours and clinical supervision support for the counsellor.
- Partnership recently renewed in consultation with DDSB leads for Psychological and Social Work services or the 2022-2023 school year.

The services of the Pinewood Centre Addiction Counsellor augment services not provided by district staff as:

- Addictions Counsellors have specific training, skills and experience related to addictions and concurrent disorders
- The Pinewood Addictions Counsellors will provide focused service for a specific population of students for whom addictions (e.g., drug, gaming etc.) are a barrier to well-being and life functioning.

### **Abilities Track and Field Meet – An Invitation to SEAC**

The Abilities Track & Field Meet provides opportunity for athletes (Grades 4-12+) to compete and come together as community.

**Friday, June 17, 2022**  
**Civic Track and Fields in Oshawa.**  
**Event anticipated to run 10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Please let Lisa Wry know if you are able to come help celebrate the incredible athletes.[lisa.wry@ddsb.ca](mailto:lisa.wry@ddsb.ca)

### **9. Presentation: Kindergarten to Grade 2 Literacy Project**

- Lisa Virtue, Speech Language Pathologist
- Lyanne Hussey, Literacy Numeracy Coach
- Lisa Drake, Senior Manager & Clinical Lead, Speech Language Hearing

A presentation on the collaboration project with the Speech Language Pathologists and Literacy Coach in partnership was given was given to the group with the following highlights:

- 1 Year project that was funded as part of the Re-engagement and Reading Support Ministry Grant.
- Scientific approach to learning to read, science and practice alignment.
- Took it from the approach as to what happens in the brain when reading.
- Pairing the science of the brain and the strategy in the classroom
- Written language is letter sounds in print.
- Positive impact has been seen throughout the classroom.
- This unique partnership has initiated small manageable shifts in educator practice.
- Created two 5-minute videos – impact of the project.
- Increase in student joy and efficacy of the literacy learning in classroom.
- Not a program but a process to create an effective reading program.
- The educators are given the knowledge on how the brain works when learning to read
- Look at the student you have or the group and adapt for those students.
- Student driven, strong focus was on letter sounds, phonetic awareness.
- Includes daily routines of phonics daily.
- Online program and easily accessible.

### **10. Open Discussion:**

- SEAC Parent/Guardian Survey Planning
  - Consider doing a survey every 4-5 years.
  - Share with families that SEAC exists and what SEAC does.
  - Important to design a survey upon what you want to learn.
  - Family experience, voice and connection.

- Surveys can be intuitive
- See how families are involved and how IEPs are evolving with the student
- Help parents be advocates for their children
- What is the experience of the kids and families?
- Interactions and relationship building with the people involved with the child's education.
- Do you have a relationship with the staff supporting your child?

**11. Business Arising from the Minutes:**

- Membership Request: Participation House.
  - Concerns about fee for service and also because they are funded by the Ministry

MOTION TO THAT SEAC DOES NOT RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES THAT PARTICIPATION HOUSE BE GRANTED MEMBERSHIP ON THE SEAC COMMITTEE.

Motion: Tara Culley

Seconded: Kathy Kedey

CARRIED

- SEAC Committee – Meeting Preference Survey
- Indicating that SEAC will continue virtual for June with a possible return to in-person in September.

**12. Association Reports & Committee Reports:**

None

**13. Correspondence:**

- CCED du Conseil scolaire Viamonde – re: PPM 81 (French original & English Translation)
  - Revisions of PPM 81 have been paused
- Near North DSB – re: Online learning resources
- Superior Greenstone DSB – re: Regulation 463/97 Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance
- Thames Valley DSB – re: composite topics
- Upper Grand DSB – re: PPM 81
- Waterloo Region DSB – re: Suspension/Expulsion Reporting Requirements
  - Perhaps a discussion for September meeting

**14. Community Concerns:**

None

**15. Celebrations and Success:**

- Abilities Track and Field Day – June 17, 2022 – SEAC members welcome.
- PIC put on a wonderful presentation for Parents on May 17.
- Abilities Scholarship submissions provide reason for celebration.

**16. Next S.E.A.C. meeting – Thursday, June 16, 2022.**

**17. Adjournment:**

That the meeting does now adjourn at 8:33 p.m. Adjournment called by SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides

Report respectfully submitted by:

Eva Kyriakides, SEAC Chair

**Table 1- Action Plan**

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION